

Ms C Burns
Senior Planning Officer
Cumberland Council



The Clerk to St Bees Parish Council
East House
Coulderton
Egremont
Cumbria
CA22 2UR

31 December 2025

Dear Christie,

Ref 4/25/2412/0F1 Proposed change of use from former public house to a short-term holiday letting property including internal alterations and demolition/rebuilding of rear extensions plus installation of garden pod building to rear of the site

Oddfellows Arms, 92 Main Street, St Bees.

This application was discussed at some length at the meeting of the Parish Council on 15 December. The Parish Council strongly objects to the application to convert the property to a short-term holiday letting property capable of accommodating 16/17 people. The Parish Council believes that the application with this level of occupancy would have significant impacts on adjacent properties and the nature of the historic village setting. The basis of our objections is set out below.

The proposed development would seem to contravene a number of policies in the Local Plan. Housing of an affordable nature is in short supply in St Bees and there is already an ample supply of short-term lettings for holiday makers and transient workers in the village where there are three hotels, numerous guest houses and bed & breakfast establishments, as well as a large number of properties available for short term lets. Fairladies Barn Guest House is immediately opposite which has off-road parking for its guests. Development of the Oddfellows as proposed in this application would be tipping the balance into an oversupply of tourist accommodation and cause economic harm to the local businesses already in the village. The fact that some existing short-term rentals are being converted back to domestic home units is evidence that there is no demonstrable local need for this form of development. This application would be counter to the NPPF objective of sustaining and supporting the local businesses already in the village and pose significant harm to the character and nature of St Bees community.

Additionally, the design, layout, scale and appearance of this development is inappropriate to the location of the property and will have an unacceptable and overbearing impact upon neighbouring residents due to its occupancy density, scale and proximity. This is partly counter to Policy H12 where developments should not result in any unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance. The application also includes a pod to the rear of the property which would inevitably result in disturbance to neighbouring properties.

The heart of a village is its people and people need homes and this property could easily be integrated into the heart of the village by conversion to provide much needed affordable homes. It will be a significant loss of the original property from the possibility of providing a

needed and affordable housing supply into the village. The property developer is presenting a significantly lack lustre concept that has no consideration for either the local need or the local community. This is partly an aspect of policy H7 and H8. This property was once two separate dwellings, and this development could have been an imaginative and bold step to reintegrate a supply of affordable family homes back into the village. The development also appears to be contrary to sections to Policy H13 - Conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential uses.

The property is located on a particularly congested part of St Bees Main Street which is often gridlocked with vehicles trying to pass parked cars. The application is offering only four parking spaces for what is proposed as a 16/17 person occupancy. This is clearly insufficient for the level of occupancy and would exacerbate the parking problems in the centre of the village where few houses have off street parking. This indicates a significant disregard for the impacts on neighbouring properties and on the general through traffic management of the Main Street, as well as the safety issues of traffic egress and ingress onto or from the highway and construction traffic management.

In summary, the development does not align with planning policy and impacts the sensitive balance of community by introducing unnecessary and unneeded short term lets when it is actually affordable homes that are required. It would have a detrimental effect on existing local businesses, result in unacceptable disturbance to neighbouring properties and pose significant and permanent vehicle and road safety risks. For these reasons the Parish Council believes the application should be refused.

Yours faithfully

J Donaldson

Mrs Jane Donaldson
Clerk to St Bees Parish Council